



City of Winston-Salem City Council
Council Agenda Item Summary

Title	Lease Agreement With T-Bird Enterprises, LLC For Twin City Thunderbirds.
City Council Committee	General Government Committee
Meeting Date	April 13, 2026
Staff Lead (Presenter)	Robert Mulhearn, Public Assembly Facilities Manager
Department Head	Robert Mulhearn
City Manager/ACM	Ben Rowe, ACM

Agenda Item Summary

Recommended Council Action	Resolution Approval
Suggested Action/ Motion Options	I move to approve this lease agreement with T-Bird Enterprises, LLC for the Twin City Thunderbirds
Strategic Focus Area	Livable Community
Strategic Plan Objective	EP3: Attracting and Retaining Businesses
Anticipated Fiscal Impact	Fiscal Impact Anticipated: See Analysis in Summary

Summary of Information

On August 16, 2016, the City Council adopted a resolution approving the initial agreement with Port Huron Hockey LLC, dba Carolina Thunderbirds to play their 2017-2018 season at the Winston-Salem Fairgrounds Annex. The initial contract was extended through the 2021-2022 season.

On May 16, 2022, City Council approved a new contract with Carolina Thunderbirds, LLC to play its home games with an initial term starting July 1, 2022 with a maximum of nine additional one-year extensions.

On August 15, 2025, the City reassigned the existing contract terms with Carolina Thunderbirds LLC to a short-term one-year lease with the ownership of T-Bird Enterprises LLC.

City staff and the Twin City Thunderbirds have agreed in principle to terms similar to the prior contract period (highlighted terms are noted in Attachment A). The agreement term shall begin on September 1, 2026 and end on August 31, 2029. The lease may automatically renew for up to five additional terms of one year each based on lease conditions.

The Public Assembly Facilities Commission an agency of the City of Winston-Salem, reviewed the terms at their meeting on March 16, 2016 and recommended to the Mayor and City Council approval of the lease agreement set here to.

Analysis of Fiscal Impact

Twin City Thunderbirds are a key revenue generator and partner at the Winston-Salem Fairgrounds. To date under the existing contract structure with all related parties the City has averaged over \$6,600 a game in profit through its first 20 regular season games. This includes food and beverage, ticketing, fees, rent, and all direct expenses.

Attachments

Attachment A

Committee Action	FC 4/14/2026
For:	Against:
Remarks: Unanimous Approved	